



Staff Retention Strategies – Retention Strategies For Reducing Patient Service Associates (PSAs) Attrition Rate in Specialist Outpatient Clinics (SOCs)

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BACKGROUND

Patient Service Associates (PSAs) play a pivotal role in ensuring smooth operational flow of the Specialist Outpatient Clinics (SOCs). Forming about 50% of the workforce in SOC, PSAs focus on patient registration and billing, appointment bookings, chaperone doctors and attend to patient relations.

Between September 2014 and June 2015, the job scope of PSAs expanded to include proactive financial counseling to patients as part of MOH's directive on subsidy enhancement and increased Medisave withdrawal limits at SOC.

PSAs were overwhelmed by the knowledge and technical know-how required of the newly implemented schemes and subsidies. This led to an increase in attrition rate among PSAs.

The current shortage of PSAs and high turnover has an impact on patient satisfaction, staff morale and job satisfaction.

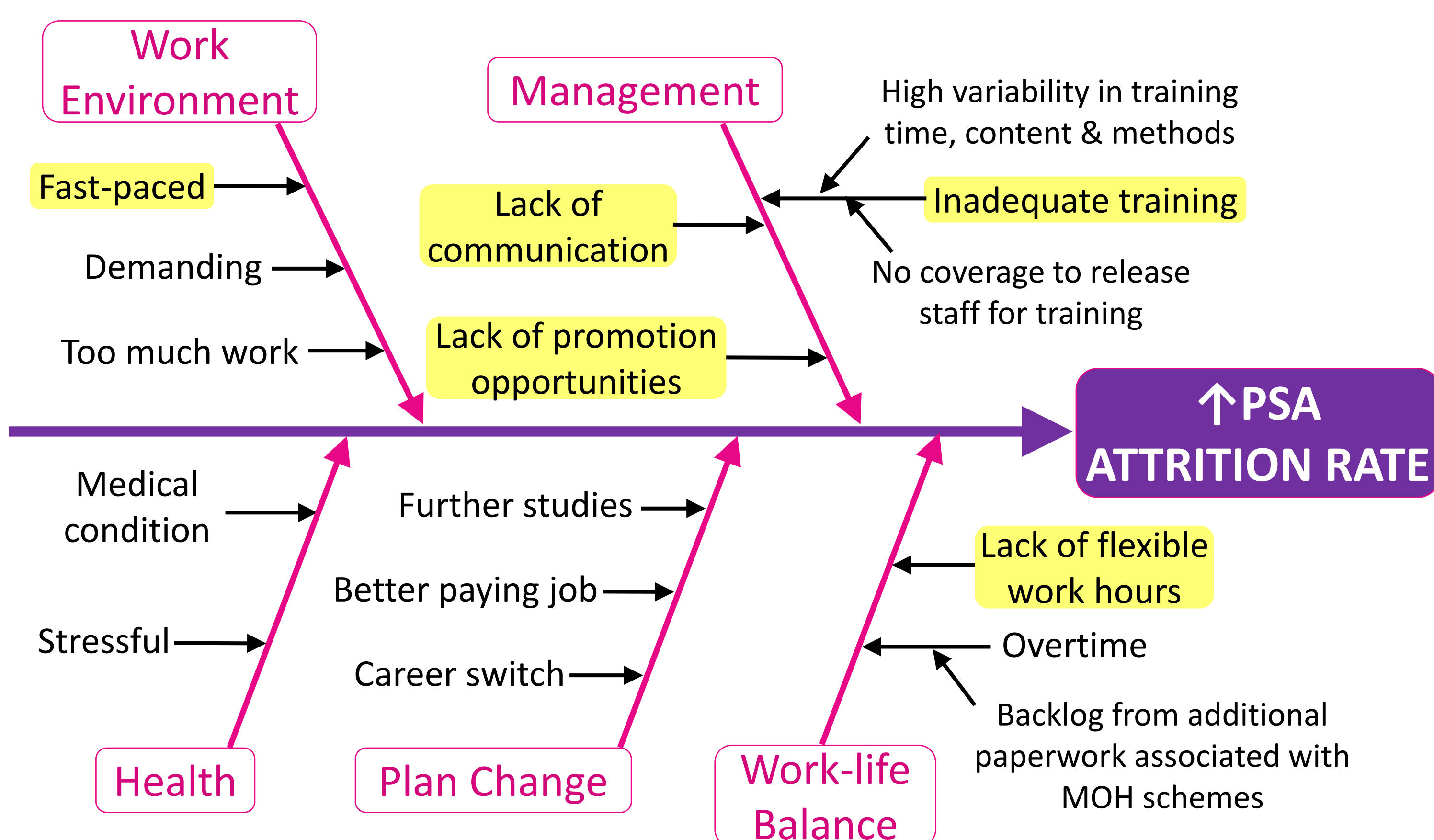
AIMS

- To determine the reasons for PSAs turnover.
- To reduce attrition by 9% over 12 months, through effective employee retention strategies.

METHODOLOGY

Identification of root causes

An Ishikawa diagram was used to identify the root causes of the increase in attrition rate among PSAs.



Top contributing root causes

Patient satisfaction

Ratings on overall satisfaction were obtained from feedback forms completed by SOC patients.

Design

Top contributing root causes were identified. Solutions addressing the following were planned and implemented:

- Increase number of in-house training programs
- Flexibility of change in work environment or work schedule for retention, up-skill and career progression
- Improve communication between management and ground staff

STRATEGIES

MAR 16

Bi-monthly Cashier Training for all PSAs who are newly appointed cashiers or require refresher training

128 PSAs completed the 2-day training



MAY 16

Implementation of Inter-Department Transfer Scheme creates opportunity for staff to experience a change in work environment to:

- Up-skill and gain exposure to greater scope of work for career development
- Match their competencies and potential with clinic needs

13 PSAs benefited from the scheme

JUL 16

Monthly Ambulatory Connection & Engagement Session (ACES) targeted at different groups of staff serves as a platform to:

- Gather feedback from staff and establish bilateral communication
- Update on new & upcoming developments

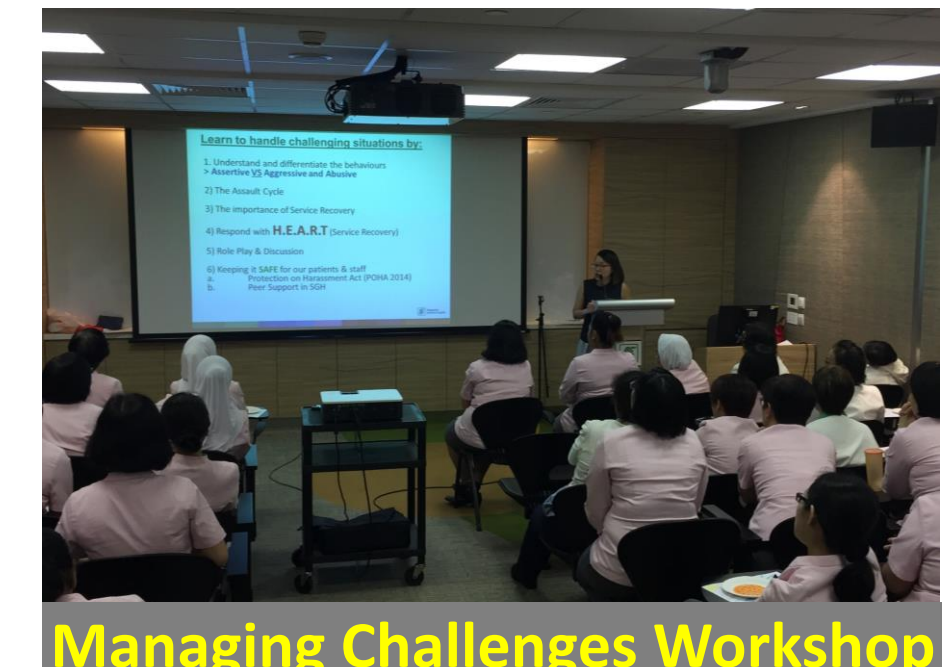
Staff felt more engaged and informed of the latest happenings within the campus and that their concerns were addressed



SEP 16

Refresher Activities to equip staff with tools for handling commonly occurring challenges and inculcate best practices in their daily work

Staff learn more when they have fun at work



NOV 16

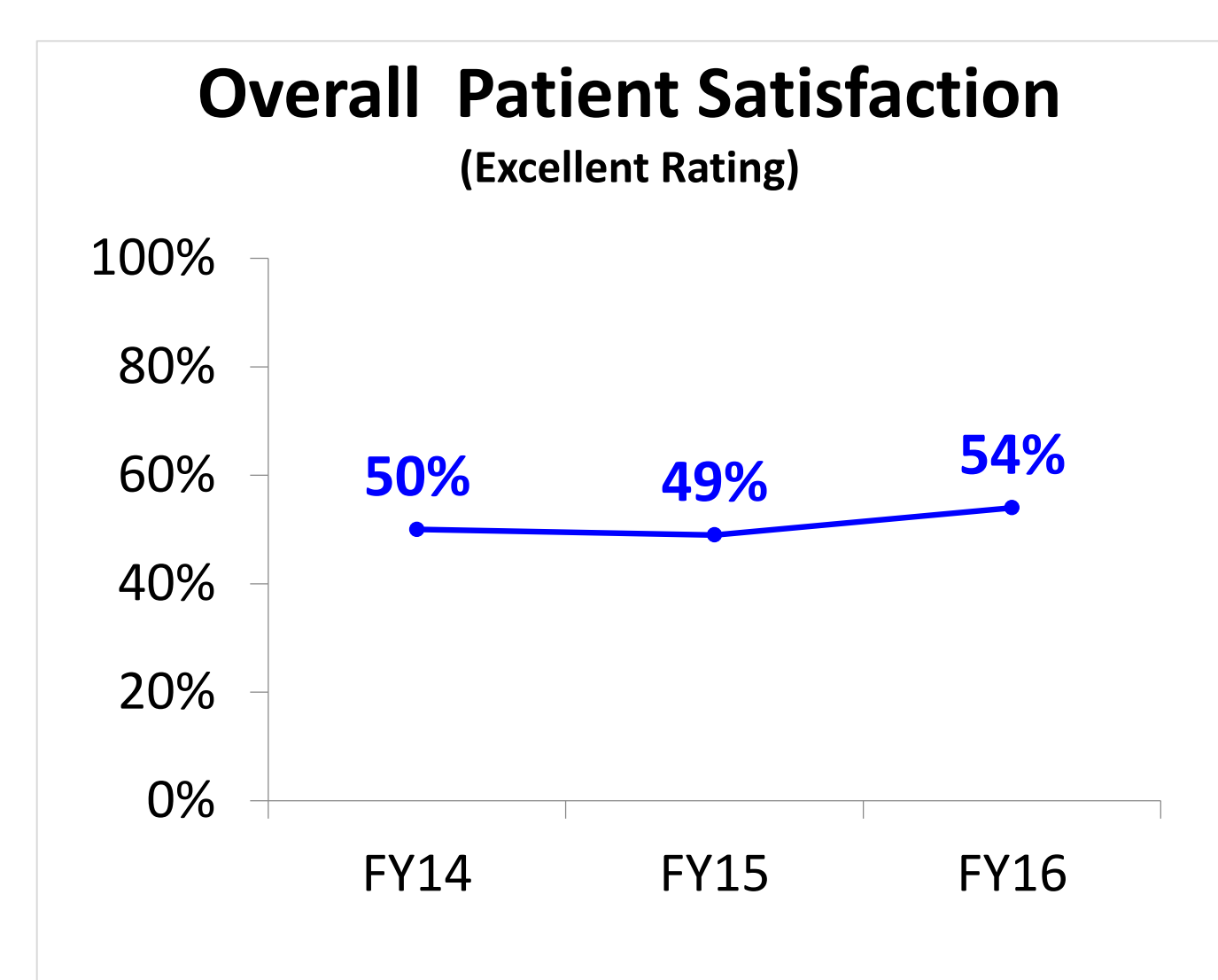
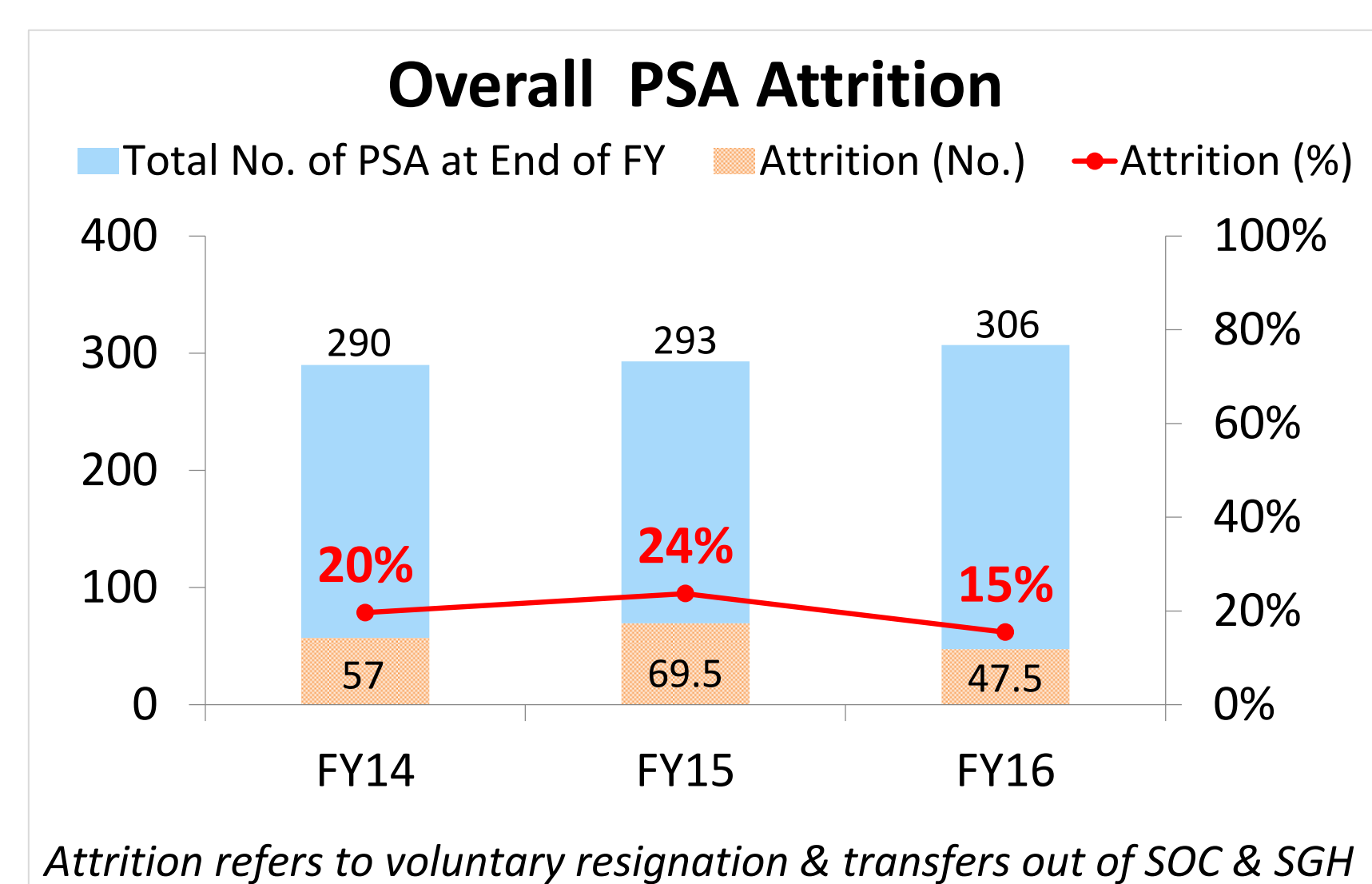
Quarterly Staff Appreciation Event to energise staff and show appreciation for their dedication and hard work

Staff recognition improved engagement and keeps them motivated



RESULTS

Compared to FY15, PSA attrition rate **declined by 9%** over FY16 (Fig. 1). Overall patient satisfaction with excellent rating **rose by 5%** from FY15 to FY16 (Fig. 2).



CONCLUSION

The 5 retention strategies implemented were effective in reducing PSA attrition rate as staff felt more engaged and motivated.

Although overall patient satisfaction did not show much improvement, better staff engagement meant higher staff morale and greater job satisfaction as PSAs have more opportunities for career progression.